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24 March 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Mr. Vance, 17 March 1965, on the NRO

1. I met Mr. Vance in his office by appointment to discuss a memorandum which we had previously submitted on the NRO. Dr. Fubini was also present.

2. Mr. Vance opened the meeting by stating that he had prepared a list of questions which relate to the organizational chart and memorandum which we had previously submitted on the NRO. He said that he would like to have our memorandum expanded to encompass these questions. Some of the questions, he said, were his own and some had been prepared by Dr. Fubini. He read the first question which related to the authority of the DNRO over launch, inflight operations and recovery. I explained the concept of a launch authority responding to DoD and said that we presumed that the DNRO would be given command authority over this installation. This struck Dr. Fubini as a new idea. Dr. Fubini then talked for a while about the complexity of the procedures involved in establishing the ephemeris of a satellite mission and indicated that the CIA proposal was designed to pre-empt control of this aspect of the program. He went on to say that under the arrangement, as he understood it, the DNRO would have no authority at all. It was certainly a job under no circumstances he would accept. We talked a little about the authority of the Executive Committee and Dr. Fubini suggested that the DNRO was perhaps the equivalent of a Secretariat. I said on the contrary he would have the authority and responsibility equivalent to that of an Assistant Secretary of a department. Dr. Fubini then suggested (as his own idea) that the best solution would be to effect a total divorce between CIA and DoD with some coordinating arrangement at the level of the 303 Committee.

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3. I said that I thought it was time to back off and review the whole problem in the light of certain basic principles. I pointed out that the President's Board and substantially everybody else in the scientific and intelligence community who had thought about the problem had strongly urged the necessity of continued, active CIA participation in the research and development aspect of the program. This was partly to ensure utilization of the technical and scientific competence which CIA had built up with such difficulty, and partly to introduce an element of competition into the development program which would serve to keep the program honest. CIA is the only agency exclusively interested in intelligence. Contributions by CIA to various proposals for the design and construction of space vehicles will help to be sure that the designs selected are those best calculated to serve intelligence and not ulterior parochial purposes. I said that the problem was whether CIA should participate at the level of approximately [redacted] a year, which represents a production and procurement contribution, or whether it should be confined to a level of contribution of [redacted] a year, which represents a technical advisory contribution. Dr. Fubini said that this indeed was about the crux of the problem. I said that any organizational solution which was designed to accommodate CIA's participation inevitably reflected a certain duality of responsibility in the program. Any organizational proposal designed to accommodate CIA involved certain built-in potentialities for disagreement, and the question was whether the Defense Department (specifically Mr. Vance) was prepared to pay this price in order to achieve the result recommended by the President's Board and others, namely adequate CIA participation. I said that it was Mr. McCone's very strong feeling, which I certainly shared, that the device of an Executive Committee, a DNR with powers commensurate with an Assistant Secretary as well as line authority over DoD elements in the program, was a workable solution. Dr. Fubini suggested that he and I retire and write up the answers to the specific questions (a copy of which Mr. Vance had in the meantime handed to me). Mr. Vance preferred to continue an oral discussion which went on for a while involving questions of budget, the role of the SOC, etc., etc.

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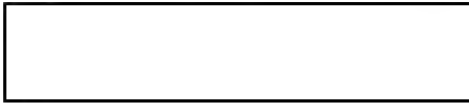
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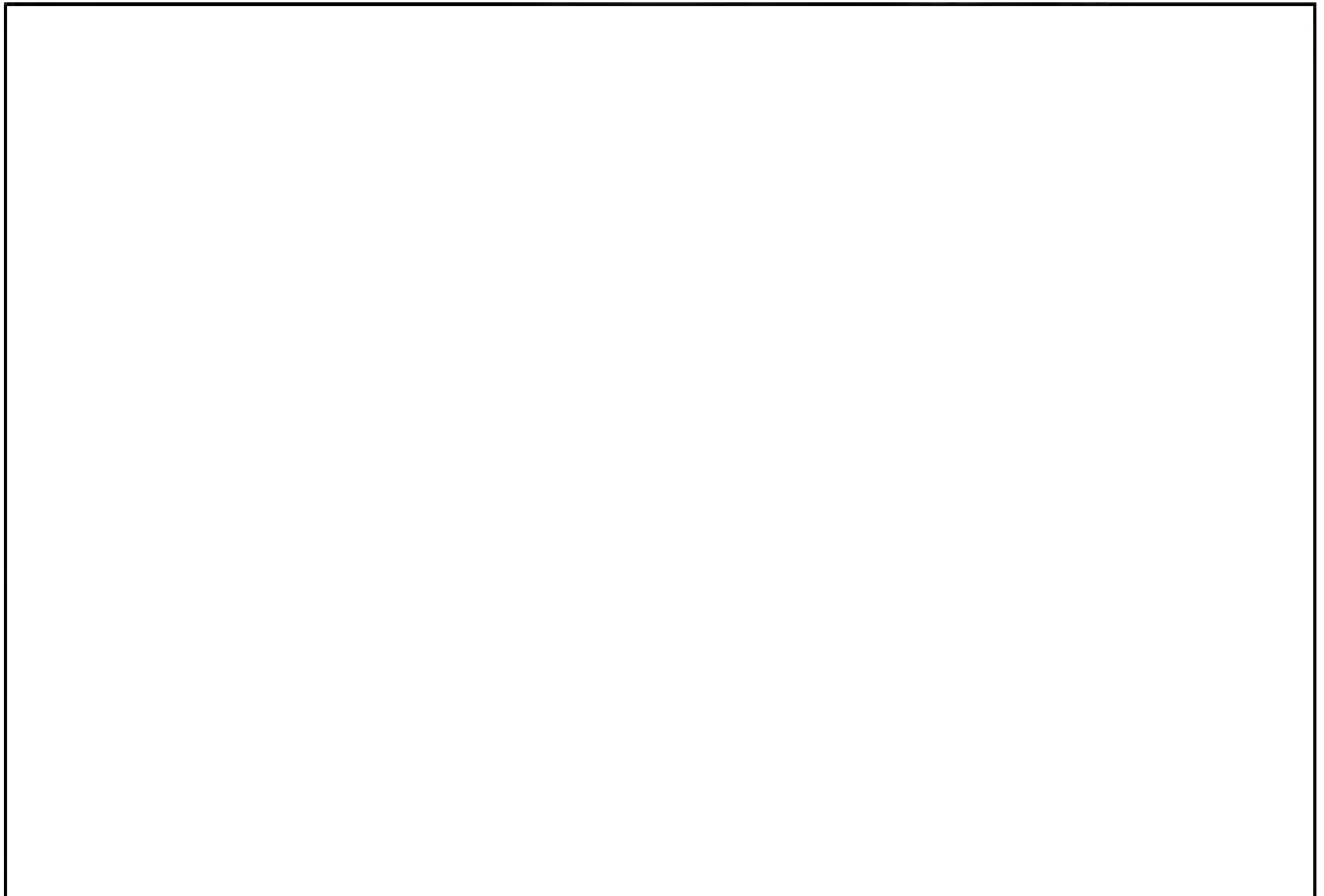
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/s/ John A. Bross

JOHN A. BROSS  
D/DCI/NIPE

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